

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 OMB-01 NIC-01 SAM-01 /080 W

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R 250304Z JAN 75

FM AMCONSULATE SURABAYA

TO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

INFO SECSTATE 0521

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SURABAYA 0060

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PT

SUBJECT: MERGER OF PARTIES IN PORTUGUESE TIMOR

REF: SURABAYA 614, PARAGRAPH THREE

1. TWO OF THE THREE POLITICAL PARTIES OF PORTUGUESE TIMOR HAVE MERGED

INTO A "COALITION", ACCORDING TO AN AFP ITEM DATED DILI AND
FEATURED IN SURABAYA NEWSPAPERS JANUARY 25. THE PARTIES ARE
UDT, WHICH FAVORS AN INTERIM "PORTUGUESE COMMONWEALTH STATUS"
FOR THE PROVINCE, AND FRETELIN, WHICH UNTIL RECENTLY FAVORED
IMMEDIATE INDEPENDENCE. NO NAME WAS GIVEN FOR THE NEW COALITION
IN A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE TIME OF THE MERGER, WHICH REPORTEDLY
ATTACKED PORTUGUESE TIMOR'S THIRD PARTY, THE PRO-INDONESIAN
APODETI, AS "NEO-COLONIALIST." THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO ALLEGEDLY ASKED
THE UNITED NATIONS TO APPOINT A "SURVEILLANCE COMMITTEE" FOR
PORTUGUESE TIMOR, WHOSE MEMBERS WOULD REQUIRE "COALITION APPROVAL",
AND COULD NOT INCLUDE "REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GREAT POWERS, OF
AUSTRALIA OR OF ASIAN COUNTRIES UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF INDONESIA."
THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO CALLED FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH PORTUGAL
LEADING TO A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT AND THEN INDEPENDENCE, WITH
PORTUGUESE TO BE RETAINED AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE, AND "COOPERATION"
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(I.E. AID) AGREEMENTS TO BE NEGOTIATED WITH LISBON.

2. COMMENT: DURING OUR VISIT TO PORTUGUESE TIMOR IN DECEMBER (REFTEL), WE JUDGED THAT THE POSTURES OF UDT AND FRETELIN WERE CONVERGING, AND ONLY PERSONALITY DISPUTES AMONG THE LEADERS KEPT THEM SEPARATE AS ORGANIZATIONS. HOWEVER, LOCAL SPECULATION WAS THAT FEAR OF INDONESIA WOULD EVENTUALLY COMPEL THEM TO MERGE, WITH FRETELIN ABANDONING ITS INSISTENCE ON IMMEDIATE INDEPENDENCE, AND UDT DIVESTING ITSELF OF ITS "COLON" IMAGE. FORMATION OF THE COALITION STRIKES A POWERFUL BLOW AT APODETT'S ALREADY MEAGER PROSPECTS, AND MEANS THAT FRETELIN'S MOTIVATED YOUNG SUPPORTERS WILL GAIN ACCESS TO UDT'S MORE ABUNDANT FUNDS. BUT THERE ARE STILL FRICTIONS WITHIN, AS WELL AS BETWEEN, THE TWO PARTIES, AND THE COALITION IS LIKELY TO BE FRAGILE FOR SOME TIME.

HOWLAND

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